Claims:

1   1.   A system for guiding a user through a complex process having a plurality of steps

2   at each of which the user is required to make a decision, the system comprising:

3   a logical structure for representing the steps of the process, each node of the structure

4   representing a step in the process and one or more of the steps presenting alternatives to the user

5   requiring the user to make a decision;

6   one or more guidance pages attached to each node of the structure, the guidance pages

7   providing the user of the system with guidance about how to make decision at the current step of

8   the process;

9   means for gathering the user responses to each step in the process to generate process

10   information; and

11   means for recommending an action to the user based on the process information.

1   2.   The system of Claim 1, wherein each guidance page further comprises one or

2   more page fragments which include fragment data and a fragment precondition, a page fragment

3   being shown to the user of the system only if the fragment precondition is met.

1   3.   The system of Claim 1, wherein the structure comprises a decision tree having one

2   or more nodes which represent each step of the process.

1   4.   The system of Claim 1, wherein the structure comprises a decision matrix.

1   5.   The system of Claim 2, wherein the process comprises a human resources process.

1   6.   The system of Claim 5, wherein the process comprises an attendance management

2   process.

1   7.   The system of Claim 5, wherein the process comprises a compensation planning

2   process.

1   8.   A method for guiding a user through a complex process having a plurality of steps

2   at each of which the user is required to make a decision, the method comprising:

3   guiding the user through the process using a logical structure for representing the steps of

4   the process, each node of the structure representing a step in the process and one or more of the

5   steps presenting alternatives to the user requiring the user to make a decision;

6   providing guidance about a decision in the process using a guidance page attached to a

7   node of the structure;

8   gathering the user responses to each step in the process to generate process information;

9   and

10   recommending an action to the user based on the process information.

1   9.   The method of Claim 8 further comprising generating the guidance page from one

2   or more page fragments which include fragment data and a fragment precondition, a page

3   fragment being shown to the user of the system only if the fragment precondition is met.

1   10.   An apparatus for guiding a user through a process having a plurality of steps, the

2   apparatus comprising:

3   a logical structure for representing the steps of the process, each node of the structure

4   representing a step in the process and one or more of the steps presenting alternatives to the user

5   requiring the user to make a decision;

6   a database containing one or more page fragments having an associated fragment

7   precondition, the page fragment being placed within a guidance page when the precondition is

8   met; and

9   means for generating a guidance page for a process step based on the page fragments.